



May 2020

# The Vision

News and updates from and about the Kentucky Department for Community Based Services  
Elizabeth Caywood, Deputy Commissioner

## Family Support

- During the month of April, the Division of Family Support (DFS) continued to focus on all things COVID-19, particularly how to adjust programs to best respond to the crisis and support Kentuckians who rely on their support. In all, the division has issued 10 pieces of instructional material to the field and asked for nine additional waivers and requests from the USDA's Food and Nutrition Service to better serve those receiving SNAP benefits. Among those are the ability to waive the interview requirement and to implement online purchasing of groceries. DFS staff also worked hard to enter Medicaid applications for all the individuals released from jails and prisons due to the pandemic; they quickly enabled benefits for all three rounds of releases. All of these changes are to ease the administrative burden on staff and ensure benefits are being received quickly and without interruption.
- DFS has been working hard, under a partnership of the Kentucky Department of Education, to craft a Pandemic EBT state plan for Federal approval. Under P-EBT, parents of children who receive free or reduced price lunches will receive a benefit equivalent to the value of those meals because children are at home. With an anticipated May launch, P-EBT could potentially serve over a half million Kentucky children and their families, with a benefit of over \$300 per child to cover these food costs for March, April and May.
- DFS staff has worked with Community Action Kentucky to implement a Spring/Summer cooling program under LIHEAP, beginning May 1 and running through October 31. DFS is also working to distribute an additional \$16M in funding, authorized through the CARES act, in the CSBG program.
- Emergency and ordinary amendments to 921 KAR 2:015 were filed on December 27, 2019, in order to pass on the federal cost of living adjustment (COLA) to the standard of need for individuals receiving Supplemental Security Income, effective January 2020. The amendment also contains language allowing the federal COLA to pass through Kentucky without further regulatory amendment. The ordinary amendment is anticipated to undergo legislative reviews in May and June and become effective this summer.
- In an effort to provide more availability and to serve families timely, we have expanded our call service hours to Monday-Friday 8 a.m. -5 p.m. (EDT). We also expanded hours to include Saturdays from 9 a.m.-2 p.m. (EDT). By increasing our number of staff available to work in the function of call services with our extended hours of availability, we have successfully served citizens quickly and efficiently.

### • **Key Performance Data:**

#### **May 4, 2020**

- SNAP – 607,376 (increase from 3/1/2020 of 95,791)
- Medicaid – 1,389,689 (increase from 3/1/2020 of 34,797)
- Presumptive Eligibility (PE) Medicaid – 34,328

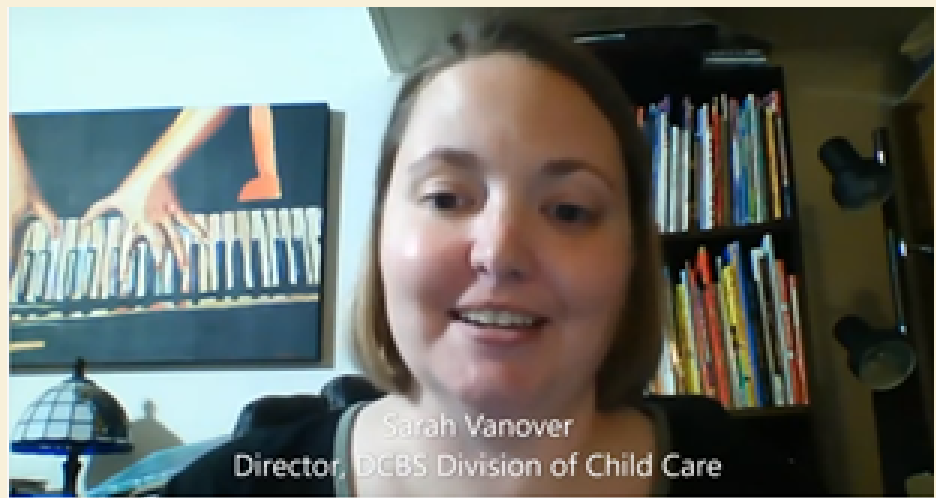


DFS SNAP Online Pilot 5-2020

**DFS Director Jason Dunn explains the SNAP online purchasing pilot in a video featured on the DCBS YouTube channel. Watch the video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kr82G75-344>.**

## Child Care

- The Division of Child Care (DCC), in partnership with the Division of Administration and Financial Management, is working to disperse \$67.74 million dollars awarded through the CARES Act to help preserve overall child care capacity throughout the state and support providers during this uncertain time.
- DCC amended its CCDF State Plan to reimburse providers participating in the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) based on enrollment versus attendance and to pay for parental co-pays during the State of Emergency related to COVID-19.
- DCC requested and received approval from the Office of Child Care to waive certain Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) requirements for Limited Duration Childcare (LDC) during the State of Emergency, which allows CCDF funds to be allocated to the LDCs. The Office of Inspector General (OIG) has approved approximately 82 Limited Duration Centers. The CCAP team is working to create LDC provider accounts in KICCS and to enroll the identified CCAP children for those centers.
- The Kentucky All STARS program has suspended all submissions and rating visits. Additionally, OIG has put a hold on all licensing surveys.
- Child Care Aware of Kentucky (CCA) staff are supporting all child care programs by providing on-line training and remote technical assistance. CCA launched a new website <https://www.childcareawareky.org/> at the end of March. This site highlights DCC information regarding COVID-19 for child care facilities.
- Providers are using this shutdown as an opportunity to seek professional development. ECE-TRIS reports a 56.4% increase in online learning. There has also been an increase in requests for approval of out of state online learning. The Professional Development Section has extended expiration dates for providers and trainers.
- No new applications have been completed through the National Background Check Program (NBCP) during the month of April. DCC continues to process Child Abuse and Neglect Registry Checks for Limited Duration Center staff.
- Key Performance Data: Based on the CCAP Executive Dashboard, there is an average 28,745 children and 15,951 families served during the first quarter of the CY 2020.



DCC CARES Act Update 4-24-2020

**DCC Director Sarah Vanover explains how the federal CARES Act supports preservation of Kentucky child care and child care providers in a video featured on the DCBS YouTube channel. Watch the video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=umyILcqXbZI>.**

## Protection and Permanency

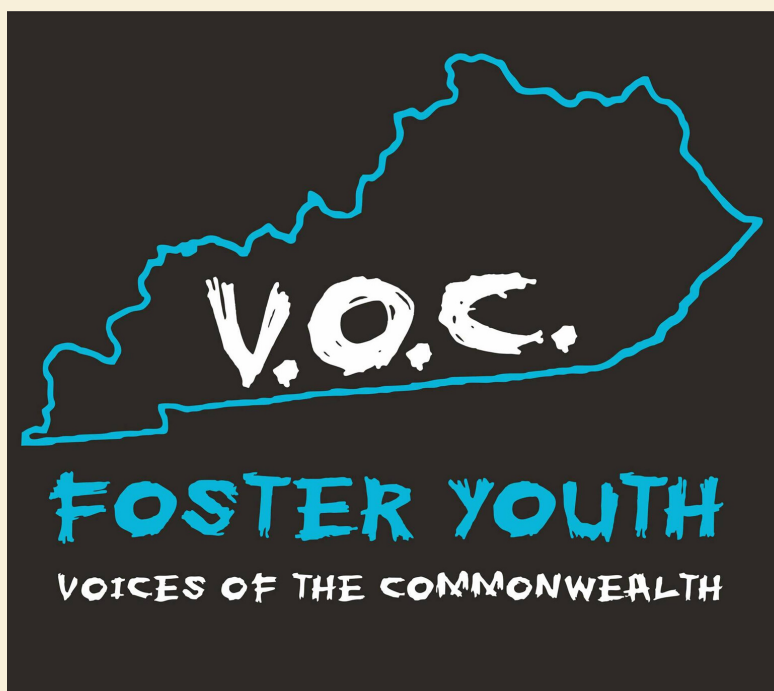
- Several activities have occurred across the state in honor of Child Abuse Prevention Month. The Division of Service Regions announced April 30 as "Wear Blue for Child Abuse Awareness" day.
- As of April 21, 2020, there were only five children decertified in their psychiatric placement settings. There are a total of eight children placed in treatment facilities out of state, of which one is de-certified and pending return to Kentucky.
- The Clinical Services Branch Medical Support Section in the Division of Protection and Permanency (DPP) continues to support the population of children in care deemed medically complex, but is now also providing consultation regarding COVID-19 and tracking children in care who have been tested.
- Joint planning and the program improvement plan (PIP) monitoring onsite visit with the Children's Bureau occurred April 28-30 virtually. Some of the activities for the virtual onsite included discussions with frontline staff, supervisory staff, and leadership staff from the Jefferson and Salt River Trail Service Regions around the implementation of the family engagement strategy and the quarterly Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) Stakeholders CQI meeting.

## Protection and Permanency

- Kentucky's Just in Time website was launched on March 16. This website provides online training and resources to foster/adoptive families, kin caregivers, and parents. In the first two weeks of launch, 187 training certificates were issued. There were 2,730 Total Page Views and 2,179 Unique Page Views in the first two weeks.
- The DPP Out-of-Home Care (OOHC) Branch has collaborated with AdoptUSKids to deliver training to Recruitment and Certification (R and C) staff, focusing on strategic, data-driven recruitment, response, and support. An in-person training was planned for May; however, this has been postponed. An interactive webinar was scheduled for April 29 with 148 staff are registered.
- The OOHC Branch has been supporting regions in moving forward with pre-service and ongoing foster parent training from a virtual platform. Trainings for recruitment and certification staff regarding the utilization of Zoom were held the week of April 20, 2020. In addition, tip sheets regarding training activities and engagement have been prepared for the field, along with electronic forms for home studies. Comparable communication has been prepared for private child placing agencies to share as tools with their staff.
- Fostering Success has a total of 104 registrants. Alternate plans are being made to provide programming for participants during the state of emergency.
- The DPP Transitional Services Branch have been working with private providers to provide support and resources to youth turning 21 on extended commitment. There were 20 youth identified who could potentially need services extended during the state of emergency through June. Provisions are being made to ensure those youth are not displaced and can remain in their apartments or current placements.
- The Voices of the Commonwealth (VOC) is hosting live Instagram peer to peer talks every Tuesday to provide support for foster youth. The VOC is also hosting a virtual talk with foster youth every Friday and providing different wellness tips during the COVID-19 crisis, such as the importance of exercise/movement, healthy ways to deal with anxiety.
- Prevention providers, including Family Preservation, Sobriety Treatment and Recovery Teams (START), and Kentucky Strengthening Ties and Empowering Parents (KSTEP) programs, continue to provider services utilizing videoconferencing and telehealth platforms.
- The DPP Child Protection Branch began work in collaboration with the National Center for Crime and Delinquency (NCCD) by a virtual project kickoff meeting for the development of a structured decision-making intake assessment tool, the first phase of implementation of the new safety model.



**Division of Service Region Field Development and Support Branch wearing their blue and meeting virtually on April 30.**





## Protection and Permanency

- The System Safety Review Team (SSRT) continues with the culture of safety review process for child fatality/near fatality cases. By the end of March, 12 cases had received the comprehensive review process including human factor debriefings and regional mappings. In April 2020, the SSRT began conducting virtual regional mapping meetings with technical assistance from Collaborative Safety. Comparison data for the SSRT is as follows:
  - 2019 March and April (full month) total number of new child fatality/near fatality investigations: 18
  - 2020 March – April 10 total number of new child fatality/near fatality investigations: 10
- Through the COVID-19 state of emergency, the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) has been a tremendous support and partner to trouble-shoot various issues, including visitation, drug testing, and permanency for foster children. DCBS continues to partner with AOC, Justice Lambert, select family and district court judges, Casey Family Programs, and KYA on various child welfare transformation efforts, with particular focus of late on COVID-19 response and reopening.
- Family First Prevention Services Act Implementation Update
  - On April 2, 2020, DCBS received notification from the Children's Bureau that its Family First Title IV-E prevention services plan was approved. The date of approval is retroactive to Kentucky's implementation date of Oct. 1, 2019.
    - Due to the delay in review and rating of evidence based practices (EBPs) by the Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse, DCBS took advantage of the option for states to complete their own independent systematic review of programs and submit to the Children's Bureau for approval of transitional payments. Those EBPs approved include the Sobriety Treatment and Recovery Team (START) and Homebuilders. The other approved EBPs on the IV-E state plan include Multi-Systemic Therapy, Functional Family Therapy, Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Motivational Interviewing, and Parent Child Interaction Therapy.
  - On April 20, 2020, the Department for Medicaid Services, in accordance with guidance from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, determined that current child caring institutions with over 16 beds providing care to children in out of home care, would not be considered Institutions for Mental Diseases if Qualified Residential Treatment Program (QRTP) standards were provided to youth. This determination will allow the state to proceed with implementation of QRTP setting requirements as outlined in the Family First Prevention Services Act, though details of implementation are still under consideration.
  - Despite no new infusion of funding, DCBS has worked diligently to expand in-home prevention services. Contracts for further expansion of Family Preservation Program (FPP) contracts and expansion of the Kentucky Strengthening Ties and Empowering Parents (KSTEP) program were recently executed. Although not yet received, the Family First Transition Act provides grant funding for \$7.9 million that will assist with expansion of EBP capacity and prevention services.
- In preparation for the implementation of the Kentucky SKY Program on January 1, 2021, with one Medicaid managed care organization (MCO) for the foster care population, including current and former foster youth, those dually committed by the courts to DCBS, the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) and those receiving Adoption Subsidy, the Core Team continues to meet on a monthly basis. Members of the Core Team include staff from across DCBS divisions, sister agencies in CHFS and staff from DJJ. In addition, 5 of 7 workgroups have been established and are also meeting on a frequent basis. Workgroups including DCBS Standards of Practice; Dually Committed Youth; Information Technology; Training and Regional Practice include members from across the Cabinet and DJJ and are focused on outlining and assessing various business processes and workflows as they exist today.
- START Update
  - START staff have worked closely with families and providers as guidance for COVID-19 measures has been provided and updated.
  - Interviews are in progress for family mentor vacancies in Daviess, Jefferson and Boone Counties and Family Mentor Lead position.
  - START leadership and Central Office leadership are working closely with national START purveyors on consistent START fidelity measures for FFPSA.
  - Finalization of contracts for FY21/22 is underway.

## Protection and Permanency

- Wendy's Wonderful Kids - During this quarter, January to March, the following data have been gathered relating to the program:
  - 76 children were served;
  - 64 children were matched with a family (A match is identified when the Intent to Adopt or the Adoptive Placement Agreement is signed);
  - 64 kids are in a pre-adoptive placement; and 53 adoptions were completed.



- Key Performance Data:

Children in OOHC – increase of 289 since 3/2/2020

3/2/20	3/9/20	3/16/20	3/23/20	3/30/20	4/6/20	4/13/20	4/20/20	4/27/20	5/3/20
9768	9750	9807	9849	9870	9990	10010	10020	1057	10053

CPS and APS Referrals Received (not those that met acceptance criteria)

3/15/20	3/22/20	3/29/20	4/5/20	4/13/20	4/19/20
4228	2964	2662	2532	2455	2589

- Child Protective Services investigation comparison data are as follows:
  - 2019 March total new investigations: 4,524
  - 2020 March total new investigations: 3,285
  - Data indicates a 27.4% decrease in new investigations from 2019 to 2020
- Children in OOHC tested – 72 tested / 72 negative
- Foster Homes / Res Facility positive tests – 6 foster parent, 2 staff at residential facilities

## Department Operations

- DCBS has over 30 administrative regulations in process. Many are in response to COVID-19 or are the result of newer statutory requirements for review/update of administrative regulations no less than every seven years.
- DCBS continues to secure protective equipment for staff in response to the COVID-19 state of emergency. DCBS is purchasing this equipment in addition to being recipient of generous donations, including upwards of 4,000 KN95 masks through the Department for Public Health.
- DCBS is preparing a 1% general fund budget reduction for this state fiscal year, approximately \$5 million, due to revenue shortfalls.
- Regular Session 2020 adjourned on April 15, 2020. The department reviewed over 60 unique bills and resolutions and numerous amendments affecting DCBS programs or services. The department's child welfare background check bill and legislation cleaning up or repealing department statutes passed. The department legislative liaison will work with divisions and department leadership over the coming months to implement all passed legislation affecting the department and plan interim legislative presentations once committee meetings convene.
- Kentucky CQI Redesign Update - DCBS continues to partner with the Capacity Building Center for States to redesign the existing CQI structure to become more data-informed, outcomes driven, and family centered. Key milestones achieved are the development of the mission statement, a kick-off for leadership and CQI specialists, and the formation of a core leadership team and two sub-committees. As a learning organization, the CQI process is a system of continuous learning that underlies all agency activities, inclusive of internal and external stakeholders, and informed by data.

## Department Operations

To that end, DCBS is committed to the development of a robust CQI process, and to demonstrate this commitment, the redesign project has continued to move forward, albeit with some modifications, and remains on the original projected timeline for implementation. Below is a summary of key activities that continue to be underway:

- CQI Self-Assessment to inform agency capacity and readiness;
- CQI Training Academy for CQI Specialists and leadership; and
- A review of the feedback from front line staff.
- Family Support Training Updates
  - SNAP and Child Care Series, the three-week classroom event for new Family Support employees, is being transitioned to a Skype-based training for participants due to COVID-19. Individual week training titles are: SNAP and Child Care: System and Policy, SNAP and Child Care: Support Services; and SNAP and Child Care: Eligibility and Enrollment. The Skype-based version of this training series will be available in May.
  - Family Support Navigation is in the process of being developed as an online training for Family Support staff. This online training was developed in response to a need identified by DCBS leadership and will be ready to launch in May.
  - Call Services for Workers and Call Services for Managers trainings are in the process of being rewritten. The revised versions will include all new material and new screen captures including the screen shots used by workers/supervisors and tip sheets.
  - SNAP Refreshers previously developed to be trained online with trainer facilitation per the CAP were put on hold by DCBS Management due to the current workload demand. These trainings are being revised to allow participants to complete the trainings asynchronously (can be accessed/completed at any time). The asynchronous online SNAP Refreshers will be available for participants as of April 23.
- Protection and Permanency Training Updates - Academy Credit for Learning Training Courses are all online through the Learning Management System (Moodle). Vulnerable Adults Part 1 is completed and is in testing phase. Recruitment and Certification Training- Building Foundations Training of Trainers in May will be delivered by use of online resources.
- PCWCP Spring 2020 Retreat - The Retreat was held online with sessions delivered via the Learning Management System (Moodle) and conference calls on April 3 and 4. There will be 40 PCWCP students graduating in May and August 2020.
- Implicit Bias Training is moving to online in the near-term.
- As part of the Kentucky Opioid Response Effort (KORE) Training Project, eight of the nine Recovery Champions web-based trainings are now live. To date, 1,305 DCBS staff, DCBS foster parents, private foster parents, private agency staff and community partners have completed a Recovery Champion training module.
- The processing of personnel actions has been moved completely online. The Department continues to hire, promote, and re-class staff during the pandemic.
- New codes for the federal sick leave and federal FMLA were established by the Personnel Cabinet. Department HR staff attended a ZOOM training with OHRM on how to accurately use these codes for payroll.
- Candace Downey has joined the Commissioner's Office to support various administrative functions of the office and its staff.

## Self-Care Corner

During this challenging time, DCBS staff can trust these sources for accurate information on COVID-19 and for resources to support well-being and #HealthyAtHome coping strategies.

- **kycovid19.ky.gov:** Kentucky's source for accurate COVID-19 information.
- **1-800-722-5725:** Kentucky COVID-19 Hotline for expert information and advice



- **staywell.com/coronavirus:** StayWell Coronavirus (COVID-19) Resource Center
- **personnel.ky.gov:** Take Care Kentuckians is the Kentucky Employees Health Program's special section that provides healthy-at-home resources for school-age children, mental health and physical well-being.